



MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Los Angeles River Center & Gardens
570 West Avenue Twenty-six, Suite 100
Los Angeles, California 90065
Phone (323) 221-9944

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP; ASLA (Hon.), Executive Officer

DATE: May 2, 2007

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item V(I): Consideration of resolution authorizing acceptance of Proposition 50 funds from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy for acquisition of APN 2821-009-021 in Devils Canyon, Santa Susana Mountains, Upper Los Angeles River Watershed, unincorporated Los Angeles County.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing acceptance of a Proposition 50 grant from the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy in the amount not to exceed \$220,000, for acquisition of APN 2821-009-021 in Devils Canyon, Santa Susana Mountains, Upper Los Angeles River Watershed, unincorporated Los Angeles County.

Background: With the Chair's approval, an application for land acquisition grant funds was made to the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy in time for the Conservancy's April 30 meeting. The Conservancy approved the grant, which if accepted by the MRCA will be used for acquisition and closing costs of an approximately 53-acre property (APN 2821-009-020) in Devils Canyon north of Chatsworth.

If the acquisition is successful, the parcel would be preserved as natural parkland, would protect a riparian corridor, provide an important buffer for the other public parklands in the vicinity, provide trail resources, and provide protection of a significant sub-watershed of the Los Angeles River.

Devils Canyon is a headwaters tributary of the Los Angeles River, located in the Santa Susana Mountains above Chatsworth. Natural water courses in Devils, Ybarra, and Browns Canyon drain down through the densely populated areas of the San Fernando Valley and into the Los Angeles River. The proposed acquisition parcel lies in the heart of Devils Canyon, immediately adjacent to and east of the MRCA's 4800+acre Rocky Peak Park. The MRCA's 1700-acre Michael D. Antonovich Park at Joughin Ranch is also close by on the east.

The subject property is undeveloped natural land with extensive oak woodland, walnut woodland, riparian, and coastal sage scrub resources, important to wildlife. The parcel could also provide a needed trail link along the bottom of the canyon for an eventual loop trail between Michael D. Antonovich Regional Park at Joughin Ranch and Rocky Peak Park. It is zoned A-2-2 in the County of Los Angeles. A recent appraisal for this and a number of other parcels in the vicinity has been completed. The owners have indicated they are willing sellers but are interested in a quick sale.

The potential acquisition is within the Conservancy's Land Acquisition Workprogram listing for Devil/Ybarra Canyons-Central. Acquisition of this Upper Los Angeles River property would directly protect land and water resources and is also consistent with the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy's Land Acquisition Workprogram, the *San Gabriel and Los Angeles River Watershed and Open Space Plan* as adopted by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and the *Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor Master Plan*.